Magazine of Majlis Ansarullah UK

ANSARUDDIN

Nov-Dec 2007 Vol.4 No.6 Nabuwatt - Fatah 1386

That he shall keep himself occupied in the service of God's creatures for His sake only; and shall endeavour to benefit mankind to the best of his God-given abilities and powers - (9th Condition of Bai'at)



WALK OF FAITH RAISES £1,000

Vet's charity effort

BY RICHARD BEAN

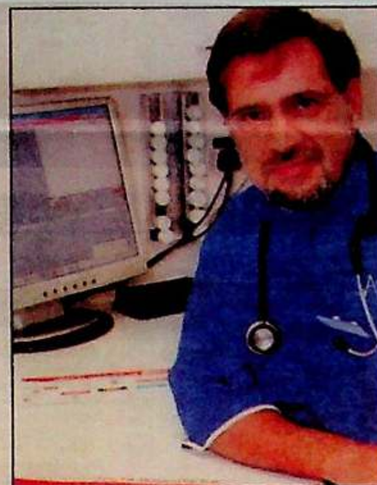
A WIGAN vet put his best toe forward for charity – and better understanding of Islam.

Dr Shams Mir was one of 1,350 volunteers taking part in the annual 13-mile long Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK sponsored walk.

And when trainers were finally removed from aching feet, he was pleased to have raised more than £1,000.

And this will form part of the £1… the event gathere… shortly t… a host … good ca… Concern… Founda… lands T… papers … the Ch… Cancer…

This …



WALK OF FAITH: Dr Shams Mir has raised £1,000

…from all over to take

Putting their best feet forward to raise £121k

theguardian



…eed Ahmad, Ch Waseem …rullah UK, Abdul Mirza

Deadlinepix M817366

…ring an 11-mile course …ton Hampshire.

… largest beneficiary …he money raised was …oncern England. This …d £17,000, to be … across its branches …ton, Wandsworth, …ham and Croydon. …manity First, Help the Aged and the Alzheimer's Society were among the other 19 charities to receive money.

The association is planning to continue its fundraising work with another sponsored walk next summer.

… would £121,500 …ponsored … walkers, …borough …0, con- …tal by

South Wales ECHO

Muslim walkers' £120k charity boost

A COMMUNITY group has helped to raise more than £120,000 for charity with its annual 12-mile sponsored walk.

The money raised from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association's UK-wide event held in Hampshire has been divided up between 20 charities across the country.

Muhammad Dar, from Cardiff, said: "The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association annual charity walk has been taking place …1985 and it is going …

"In 2005, we raised over £50,000; in 2006 we raised £70,000; and this year, on the day alone, we collected £72,000.

"This year's event ended up raising £120,000, which we've donated to charities and good causes.

"Our members in South Wales decided that they wanted to give £2,000 of the money they raised to a charity working in Wales, so that people in Wales would benefit directly from their fundraising activities and this is why we're proud to be making this donation to Help the Aged in Wales."

Ana Palazon, director of Help the Aged in Wales, said: "We are very grateful to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association for making this donation.

"This money will be used directly to assist us with our work of co… poverty, reducing … challengi… defeating … preventin… deprivati… people in…



…, left, of the Ahmadiyya …er £2,000 to Ana Palazon, …les, after his 12-mile



Media Coverage of Charity Walk 2007



NATIONAL MAJLIS-E-AMALA ANSARULLAH UK 2007 (INCLUDING NAIBEEN) WITH HUZOOR-E-AQDAS

Magazine of Majlis Ansarullah UK

ANSARUDDIN

Nov-Dec 2007 | Vol.4 No.6 | Nabuwat - Fatah 1386

ANSARULLAH PLEDGE

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah. He is One and has no partner and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His Servant and Messenger.

I solemnly pledge that I shall endeavour throughout my life for the propagation and consolidation of Ahmadiyyat in Islam and shall stand guard in defence of the institution of Khilafat. I shall not hesitate to offer any sacrifice in this regard. Moreover, I shall exhort my children to always remain dedicated and devoted to Khilafat. Insha Allah.

Contents

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Editorial

Ansarullah's responsibility to learn and teach the Holy Qur'an

It is apparent from the various sermons and guidelines provided by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V *(aba)* that he deeply keeps in view the spiritual training of the Jama'at. It seems to be his top priority and great desire that members of the Jama'at achieve the lofty status which is expected of them. For the same reason, in his Friday Sermons and his address at the Ansarullah Ijtima, he has laid great emphasis on the learning and teaching of the Holy Qur'an and stressed upon Ansars that this is one of their most important responsibilities. They must realise their most crucial duty and take every measure to ensure that not only do they enlighten themselves by learning the Holy Qur'an but that their children should benefit from the blessings of the Holy Qur'an. Moreover, simple learning of the text is not enough; they must endeavour to learn the translation and meanings of the Holy Qur'an.

Uthman ibn Affan relates that The Holy Prophet (pboh) said:

"The best of you are those who learn the Holy Qur'an and teach it". (Bukhari)

Muslims of the earliest period swiftly and whole-heartedly acted upon this advice and their lives were transformed. They became successful and victorious in every field of life. God blessed them not only spiritually but also with all the worldly blessings. In our age, again, God has sent His Reformer to renovate the religion and to project the true picture of Islam and the beautiful teachings of the Holy Qur'an. Hadhrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah (as) devoted the whole of his life to this dedicated task to present to the world the radiant light of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, which is preserved in the form of his books. He admonished his Jama'at:

"It is mandatory for you not to forsake the Holy Qur'an as your glory is linked to it. All those who will glorify the Holy Qur'an will be glorified in the Heavens (Kishti Nooh)".

Propagating the teaching of the Holy Qur'an was determined as one of the most important tasks of Ansar when Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) established the Majlis Ansarullah. During numerous sermons and addresses he emphasised this point and reminded Ansar of their vital duty. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III (ra) also laid great emphasis on this and said:

"Love the Holy Qur'an so much that no worldly object should be dearer to you. But I see that the Jama'at is not paying due attention towards this. Every Ahmadi household should be such that every member of the family, who is of age, should be reciting the Holy Qur'an in the morning". (Al-Fazal19 Feb 1966)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV (ra) also directed the Jama'at to pay great attention towards this important duty. He said:

"It is our fundamental task that we develop the habit of recitation of the Holy Qur'an and ponder over its meanings. It is a key factor without which we cannot be trained properly. This is something towards which most of our missionaries, presidents and Umara are indolent". (Friday Sermon, 4th July 1997)

In light of the above, it is our absolute responsibility to take this task very seriously and pay due attention towards the teaching of the Holy Qur'an. Not only should we make it our practice to recite the Holy Qur'an daily, but also try to learn its translation and understand its meanings. May Allah enable all of us to act upon this guidance so that we become worthy of the title "Ansarullah"

Darsul Qur'an

Allah's promise for the Second Coming of the Holy Prophet (pboh)

He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ
يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيٰتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَ
يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ
كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ③

And among others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise.

وَآخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ④

That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of immense grace.
(Al-Jumu'ah 3-5)

ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ
وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ⑤

The Divine mission of the Holy Prophet (pboh) consisted in the performance of the fourfold sacred duty referred to in the verse under comment. This was the noble task which was to be entrusted to that great Prophet for whose appearance among the unlettered Arabs the Patriarch Abraham had prayed several thousand years in advance, when in company with his son Ishmael, he was raising the foundations of the Ka'aba.

In fact, no Reformer can truly succeed in his mission unless he prepares, by his noble and purifying example, a community of sincere, devoted and righteous followers, whom he teaches the ideals and principles of his Message and their philosophy, significance and importance, and then sends them out to preach that Message to other people. The training he imparts to them refines their intellect, and the philosophy of his teaching engenders in them certainty of faith, and his noble example creates in them purity of heart and refined character. It is to this basic fact of religion that the verse under comment refers.

The verse signifies that the Message of the Holy Prophet (pboh) was meant not only for the Arabs among whom he was raised but for all non-Arabs as well, and not only for his contemporaries but also for the coming generations till the end of time. Or, the meaning may be that the Holy Prophet (pboh) will be raised among another people who have not yet joined his immediate followers. The reference in the verse and in a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet (pboh) is to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet (pboh) in the person of the Promised Messiah in the Latter Days.

Says Abu Hurairah: "One day we were sitting with the Holy Prophet when Sura Jumu'ah was revealed. I asked the Holy Prophet (pboh), "Who are the people to whom the words *And among others from among them who have not yet joined them*, refer. Salman the Persian was sitting among us. Upon my repeatedly asking him the same question, the Holy Prophet (pboh) put his hand on Salman and said, "If faith were to go up to the Pleiades, a man from these would surely find it'. (Bukhari).

This hadith shows that the verse applies to a man of Persian descent. Now the Promised Messiah, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, was of Persian descent. Other sayings of the Holy Prophet (pboh) speak of the appearance of the Messiah at a time when there would remain nothing of the Qur'an but its words, and nothing of Islam but its name, i.e., the true spirit of Islamic teaching will be lost. (Baihaqui).

Thus the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith both seem to agree that these verses refer to the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet in the person of the Promised Messiah.

The verses refer to the good fortune of the people among whom the Holy Prophet (pboh) will be raised for the second time in the person of one of his followers - the Promised Messiah.

Dars-ul-Hadith
HELP YOUR BROTHER, BE HE THE OPPRESSOR OR THE OPPRESSED

Narrated by Hadhrat Anas, Allah be pleased with him: "The Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: 'Help your brother, be he the oppressor or the oppressed. The Companions said : 'Oh Prophet of Allah, we understand that we should help him when he is the aggrieved party but how should we help him when he is the wrong-doer?' He said 'Hold his hand.' " (Bukhari)

Explanatory Note: This wonderful hadith is a compendium of the philosophy of brotherhood and the philosophy of ethics. The philosophy of brotherhood postulates that a brother should be helped, be he the oppressor or the oppressed; brotherliness is not a value that can be ignored or omitted in any circumstances. One who is our brother is always deserving of help. His being the guilty or the injured party does not affect his right to receive help. As against this, the philosophy of morality postulates that whether we have to deal with a brother or a stranger, it is our duty, in any case, to cleanse this world of all injustice and vice and to establish virtue and justice. If a person happens to be a stranger, it does not mean that we are free to do him wrong and if someone is our brother, it would not mean that we should therefore abet his injustice and be his accessories.

Superficially, the postulates seem to be out of harmony and in conflict with one another. If a wrong-doing brother is not aided, bonds of brotherhood break down. And if the wrong-doing brother is helped, justice goes by the board. But our Lord linked together these two parallel channels which do not apparently seem to meet. He linked the two by means of an intermediary channel in such a manner that they now flow like a single stream. He observed, in effect, that brotherhood was such a holy relationship that there was no cutting it asunder, under any circumstances, whether a brother is good or bad, oppressor or oppressed, he remains a brother always and there is no cutting off the brotherly ties.

But the God of Islam would not permit injustice and enjoins equity even to enemies. Therefore, the two postulates should be so harmonised that help should be rendered to the brother in any case but, if the oppressor is a brother, the form of help should be changed. If he is the oppressed party, stand by him to fight injustice but if he is the wrong-doer, then embrace him and hug him hard and hold tight his oppressive hand and say, 'Brother, I stand by you in all circumstances but Islam does not permit injustice and therefore, I will not let your hand do wrong.' This is the sacred principle that the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be on him and His blessings) has laid down in this hadith.

To put on it the construction as some do that a particular language has been used by the Holy Prophet (pboh) in this hadith only for purposes of emphasis and that its gist postulates that if your brother is the aggrieved party you should help him but, if he be the wrong-doer, then line up against him, is not only wrong but also a travesty of the wise wording of the hadith. If that were the aim of the Holy Prophet, Prophet (pboh), he could very well have enjoined a line-up against injustice whether its perpetrator was an enemy or a brother. But he did not say so. On the contrary, in this command, he has formulated in the following terms, a fine and novel postulate out of two apparent contradictories: (1) A brother is deserving of help in any case (2) Injustice must be resisted in any case (3) If the brother be the aggrieved party help him and, if he be the wrong-doer, then change the shape of help, by holding his aggressive hand, so that brotherliness is sustained and injustice is also prevented.

This is the compound theory which, fourteen centuries ago, the Prophet of Allah (pboh) put across to the world from the desert of Arabia. But till today, not one of the progressive nations of Europe or America has attained to its ethical height. If they made a pact of brotherhood with any nation, in order to honour the obligation of brotherliness, they opened wide the gates of unbounded tyranny and if, according to their notions, they turned to prevent some injustice, they tore to bits the covenant of brotherhood.

Writings of the Promised Messiah (as)
The Holy Qur'an

A Book filled with the teachings on Unity of God

Of all the revealed Books which we find today, it is only the Holy Qur'an whose claims to having been revealed from God are established on the strength of irrefutable arguments. The principle it has enunciated regarding salvation corresponds exactly with the dictates of truth and human nature. The doctrines it propounds are so perfect and well founded that they are entirely supported by powerful and irrefutable evidence. Its injunctions are based on nothing but the truth. Its teachings are completely free from adulteration or idolatry, innovation and creature worship. It is a book in which there is exceeding eagerness to manifest the Oneness and Greatness of God and to emphasise the perfection of the attributes of the One and Only God. It is a Book which has this outstanding quality that it is filled entirely and purely with the teachings of the Unity of God and does not permit any manner of blemish or defect or shortcoming or any other aspersion to be cast against the Holy Creator

It does not desire to impose any doctrine perforce. On the contrary, it precedes everything that it expounds with such arguments and logic as establish its truth. It proves its objectives and purport with weighty arguments and strong evidence. Having presented clear arguments to explain every principle it enunciates, it leads man to firm belief and absolute understanding of realities. It removes with the help of lucid enunciation all the defects, impurities and irregularities which infest human beliefs, practices, words and deeds. It also teaches all etiquettes which are essential to cultivate human values in man. It meets the challenge of every corruption with no less a force than that displayed by the corruption itself prevalent in the world today. Its teachings are straight, powerful and well balanced as if they were a reflective mirror of nature itself and a true copy of the law of nature. It is like an enlightening sun for the inner eye and perceptive faculty of the heart. (*Roohani Khazain, Vol. 1: Braheen-i-Ahmadiyya, pp 81-82*)

A Unique Miracle

The Holy Qur'an is a miracle the like of which never was and ever will be. The age of its blessings and bounties is everlasting. It remains as manifest and radiant in any other period as it was in the period of the Holy Prophet of Islam, peace be upon him. It should also be kept in mind that the speech of man is directly proportional to the vastness of his resolve, aptitude and determination. The greater his aptitude and determination and motivation, the more exquisite will be the quality of his speech. The same is the case of revelations from God. The loftier the aptitude of the recipient of revelation, the more sublime will be the quality of the word of God. In proportion to the vastness of his resolve, aptitude and determination, the revelation bestowed upon him was of the highest order; hence none can ever be born to equal him in this regard. *(Malfoozat Vol. 3, p 57)*

The Holy Qur'an is a treasure-chest, but few are those who are aware of it. *(Malfoozat, Vol. 2, p. 344)*

Boundless wisdom

The Holy Qur'an is so glorious that none other can excel it in its glory. It is *Hakam*, the one whose judgment is ultimate; it is *Muhaimin*, a compendium of all guidance. Therein is found every argument which one may require. It is this Book which has scattered in defeat the very core of the enemy's might. A Book which covers everything in depth and contains the news of what was and what is to be. Falsehood can attack it neither from the front nor from the rear. It is the very light of God Almighty. (*Roohani Khazain, Vol. 16: Khutba Ilhamiya, p. 103*)

Let it be known that the most outstanding miracle of the Holy Qur'an is that boundless sea of deep wisdom - those solid facts, those avenues of Quranic knowledge so rich in philosophy - which we can manifestly present to all nations and peoples of every language, be they Indians, Persians, Europeans or Americans, whichever country they belong to. The Quranic miracle is capable of rendering them defenceless, speechless and totally disarmed. The meanings of the Holy Qur'an are unfolded as demand is created according to the changing times and stand guard like well-armed soldiers against the insinuations and aspersions cast in every age. Had the Holy Qur'an been limited in extent regarding that which it comprises of solid facts and subtle realities it could not have been deemed as that perfect miracle (*Roohani Khazain, Vol. 3: Izala-e-Auham, Pt 1, p. 255*)

The Evolution of Religious Teachings

By

Dr. Latif Ahmad Qureshi

Part II

Hadhrat Muhammad[saws]

Soon after Hadhrat Isa[as] left Jerusalem in search of the ten lost tribes of House of Israel, the faith that he had introduced became corrupted. Instead of Unity of God, the idea of Trinity took root. Instead of considering Jesus as a man, people started worshipping him as god. Instead of considering God as Merciful and Forgiving, He was considered to be weak and unable to forgive any sins. Hence the idea of the original sin of Adam being inherited by all the human beings took shape. Hadhrat Isa [as] who escaped death on the cross was considered to have died on it and thus considering him to be an accursed person if only for three days. This monstrous and terrible idea was to sustain the belief of atonement for the inherited sin of the human race. The day of the Sabbath was changed to Sundays. The eating of the flesh of swine that was forbidden was freely consumed. These are only a few of the grave mistakes that crept into Christianity. So about six hundred years after Hadhrat Isa[as], the Promised Law bearing Prophet like Hadhrat Moosa[as] appeared in the land of Arabia, as was foretold by these true prophets of God. His name was Hadhrat Muhammad bin Abdullah[saws] and was from the progeny of Hadhrat Ismael[as], the elder son of Hadhrat Ibrahim[as]. He lived in the city of Mecca in Arabia near Baitullah, the oldest house built for the worship of God. He brought the Holy Qur'an which was revealed to him by Allah, the Lord of the Universe, over a period of 23 years. He made the following claims in the Holy Qur'an:

- He is the Messenger sent by Allah.

"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah, The Sovereign, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise.

He it is Who has raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom though before that they were in manifest error." (Al-Jumu'ah 62:2-3)

- He is a Law bearing Prophet like Hadhrat Moosa[as].

"Verily We have sent to you a Messenger, who is a witness over you, even as We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh;" (*Al-Muzzammil* 73:16)

- His coming is foretold in the Old and New Testaments.

"Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet, the Ummi whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel which are with them. He enjoins on them good and forbids them the bad things and removes from them their burden and the shackles that were upon them. So those who shall believe in him and honour and support him and help him and follow the light that has been sent down with him – these shall prosper." (*Al-A'raf* 7:158)

- He is Khatam un Nabiyyin – the most exalted of all the Prophets.

"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets and Allah has full knowledge of all things." (*Al-Ahzab* 33:41)

- The law revealed to him is perfect and the name of the religion is Islam.

"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion." (*Al-Ma'idah* 5:4, 41)

"You are the best people raised for the good of mankind; you enjoin good and forbid evil and believe in Allah." (*Al'Imran* 3:111)

"Surely, the true religion with Allah is Islam"(*Al'Imran* 3:20)

- There have been many true Prophets sent by God in other parts of the world.

"Verily, We have sent thee with the Truth, as a bearer of glad tidings and as a Warner; and there is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent" (Al-*Fatir* 35:25)

"Thou art surely a Warner. And there is a Guide for every people." (*Al-Ra'd* 13:8)

"And We have not sent any Messenger except with the revelation in the language of his people." (*Ibrahim* 14:5)

- All Prophets of God must be revered and respected.

"This Messenger of Ours believes in that which has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believer; all of them believe in Allah and in His angels and in His books, and in His Messengers, saying, We make no distinction between any of His Messengers; and they say, 'We have heard and we are obedient. Our Lord, we implore Thy forgiveness, and to Thee is the returning." (*Al-baqarah* 2:286)

- The practice prevalent in many religions of making their holy men as partners of God is wrong.

"Do the disbelievers think that they can take My servants as protectors instead of Me? Surely, We have prepared Hell as an entertainment for the disbelievers." (*Al-Kahf* 18:103)

- Islam will eventually prevail over all other religions of the world.

"He it is Who sent His messenger with guidance and the religion of Truth, that He may make it prevail over every other religion, even though the idolaters may resent it." (*Al-Taubah* 9:33; *Al-Saff* 61:10)

- There is no compulsion in religion and the victory will be due to sound reasoning.

"There is no compulsion in religion. Surely the right way has become distinct from error; so whosoever refuses to be led by those who transgress, and believes in Allah, has surely grasped a strong handle which knows no breaking. And Allah is All-Hearing. All-Knowing.

'Allah is the Friend of those who believe; He brings them out of all kinds of darkness into light." (*Al-Baqarah* 2:257-258)

- His message is universal and for all times to come.

"Say, O mankind, truly I am ***a Messenger to you all from Allah*** *to Whom belongs the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He. He gives life and He causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the Ummi Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words; and follow him that you may be rightly guided."* (*Al-a'raf* 7:159)

"And We have sent thee as ***a Messenger to all mankind****. And sufficient is Allah as a Witness."* (*Al-Nisa* 4:80)

"And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of glad tidings and ***a Warner for all mankind,*** *but most men know not."* (*Al-Saba* 34:29)

- This message will always be protected by God and will not get corrupted. This protection of the message of Hadhrat Muhammad[saws] will be done in two ways. Firstly the Qur'an itself will be verbally protected in its original form.

"Verily, it is We Who have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We are its Guardian." (*Al-Hijr* 15:10)

This promise was fully fulfilled and even now after the lapse of fourteen centuries the text of the Holy Qur'an remains unaltered in its original form.

The second type of protection given to these eternal teachings of the Holy Qur'an is the correct interpretations of its teachings. This was also promised and Hadhrat Muhammad[saws] made a prophecy that a Reformer (*'Mujaddid')* will appear at the turn of every century to lead his followers and to correct any false beliefs that they may have been adopted (Abu Daood Vol 2, page 212, *Kitabul Malahim*). Finally, at the beginning of the fourteenth century after him a great reformer named Isa bin Maryam and Al-Imam-ul-Mahdi will come and lead Islam to its final triumph over all faiths.

"He it is Who has raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom though before that they were in manifest error.

And He will raise him among others of them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise." (*Al-Jumu'ah* 62:3-4)

These verses refer to two appearances of Hadhrat Muhammad[saws] and the second coming is in the later days. It becomes clear from the study of *Hadith* that this is Isa bin Maryam. (Bukhari Kitabul Tafseer, Sura Juma).

The Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] of Qadian

The Reformers or *mujaddideen* came at the turn of each century as foretold and finally at the turn of fourteenth century came the Promised Messiah[as]. Many beliefs contrary to the teachings of Holy Qur'an were prevalent among the Muslims. He corrected them all. Some of them are outlined below;

- The belief that Hadhrat Isa bin Maryam [as] (Jesus son of Mary) the Israeli Prophet continues to remain alive in heavens and will bodily descend in the later day.

He proved from the clear quotations from the Holy Qur'an that Jesus son of Mary passed away like all human beings.

"And when Allah will say, 'O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, 'Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah?" he will answer, "Holy are Thou, I could never say that to which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind and I know not what in Thy mind. It is Thou alone Who art the Knower of all hidden things;

"I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me – 'Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.' And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them, and Thou art Witness over all things" (*Al-Ma'idah* 5:117-118)

This verse clearly shows that on questioning by Allah at the time of resurrection Jesus son of Mary will be unaware of the present Trinity that is the beliefs of

the Christians, implying that this corruption of their faith occurred after his natural death.

"And Muhammad is but a Messenger. Verily all Messengers have passed away before him." (*Al'Imran* 3:145)

This verse that was revealed during the lifetime of Hadhrat Muhammad[saws] clearly mentions that all prophets before him, including Hadhrat Isa bin Maryam[as], passed away.

- Regarding the descent of Hadhrat Isa[as] in the latter days, the Promised Messiah said that he was appointed in the spirit and person of Hadhrat Isa[as] and no one will ever descend from heaven.

- Another very important misconception that had crept into the Islamic teachings was the concept of Jihad. He corrected this and proved that the teachings of Islam are very logical and need no compulsion for satisfying the human mind. No one in the modern world is trying to eliminate Islam with brute force. All the enemies of Islam are using argument, logic and reasoning to harm Islam and these are the weapons that Muslims should also utilise.

- As a practical means to show this, he defended Islam and the Holy Qur'an against all prevalent objections of Christians, Jews, Hindus, Agnostics, atheist and others through his enormous collections of writings amounting to more than 84 books.

- He established a community of his followers and re-instituted the system of Khilafat among his followers. This institution continues to lead the believers one hundred years after his death.

The Teachings of Islam

So now that the discussion about the Messengers of God is complete, I may just point to the glorious teachings that the Holy Qur'an had given to the modern world.

- Concept of God – A very Powerful, Gracious and Merciful God Who has personal relationship with all his creature is described in great detail and to quote a few:

"In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. All praise belongs to Allah alone, Lord of all the worlds. The Gracious, the Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgement. (*Al-Fatihah* 1:1-4)

"He is Allah, and there is no god beside Him, the Knower of the unseen and the seen. He is the Gracious, the Merciful.

He is Allah and there is no god beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of peace, the Bestower of security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah far above that which they associate with Him.

He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise." (*Al-Hashr* 59:23-25)

"And when My servants ask thee about Me, say, "I am near; I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me and believe in Me, that they may follow the right way." (*Al-Baqarah* 2:187)

"And your Lord says, 'Pray unto Me; I will answer your prayer" (*Al-Mu'min* 40:61)

- The purpose of the creation of human beings is described extensively but just to quote a few examples:

"O ye men! Worship your Lord Who created you and those who were before you, that you may guard against evil" (*Al-Baqarah* 2:22)

"And I have not created the jinn and the men but that they may worship Me" (*Al-Dhariyat* 51:57)

"And strive with you wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah" (*Al-Taubah* 9:41)

"And as for those who strive to meet Us – We will, surely, guide them in Our ways." (*Al-'Ankabut* 29:70)

- There is detailed guidance about every facet of daily life. The rights of Allah on humans and the rights of other humans on each other are described very clearly. The rights of parents and other relatives, neighbours and all human beings are recorded clearly. Instructions about eating, drinking, clothing, talking, spying, telling lies, backbiting and other evil practices are given. It gives instructions on good practices like charitable activities, looking after the poor, orphans, widows, sick, children, animals, marriage, divorce, inheritance, trade, money and how to keep it clean. Personal cleanliness and health is dealt in great details. In fact there is no human situation about which guidance is not present is this final revealed teaching of God.

"Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others; and giving like kindred and forbids indecency and manifest evil and transgression. He admonishes you that you may take heed." (*Al-Nahl* 16:91)

"You shall worship none but Allah and be kind to parents and to kindred and orphans and the poor, and speak to men kindly." (*Al-Baqarah* 2:84)

"And do not devour your property among yourselves by false means and offer it not as bribe to the authorities that you may devour a part of the wealth of other people wrongfully while you know." (*Al-Baqarah* 2:189).

"And give full measure when you measure and weigh with a right balance; that is best and most commendable in the end." (*Bani Isra'il* 17:36)

(continued on page 21)

No Compulsion in Religion -
A Quranic refutation of the traditionalist belief in the use of force
Part II

By Syed Mir Mahmood Ahmed Nasir
English Translation by Hamdah Sanori Farooqi

Some Traditionally Held Beliefs versus the Holy Qur'an

Syed Mir Mahmood Ahmed Nasir, Principal Jamia Ahmadiyya Rabwah, has presented and refuted some of the mistaken beliefs commonly held by many Muslims. In the last issue, he dealt with arguments from the first two chapters of the Holy Qur'an, and continues in this issue with Chapters 3 to 9.

Al-e-Imran

This Surah clearly states that our responsibility is only the delivery of the message. If those who receive the message choose to believe, they have acquired guidance, and if not, we have fulfilled our responsibility. In Surah Al-e-Inerrant, verse 21, Allah the Almighty says:

> *But if they dispute with thee, say, 'I have submitted myself to Allah, and also those who follow me'. And say to those who have been given the Book and to the unlearned, 'Have you submitted'? If they submit,* [and accept Islam], *then they will surely be guided; but if they turn back, then thy duty is only to convey the message. And Allah is Watchful of His servants.* (3:21)

This verse clearly states that if the opponents of Islam disagree with us and turn away, we have no further obligation. Our responsibility is only to the extent of conveying the message. Alas! Most people do not deem this directive of The Holy Qur'an sufficient, and maintain that if there is disagreement, all power and strength should be used to force a conversion.

Verse 65 of Surah Al-e-Imran, makes the subject crystal clear, and invites the people of the Book towards peaceful co-existence. In this verse, Allah the Almighty directs:

> *Say, 'O people of the Book! come to a word equal between us and you* [area where we agree], *that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him,* [Your revealed book also teaches you the unity of God, negates association of partners with God, our Holy Book also teaches us unity of God, rejects association of partners with God] *and that some of us take not others for Lords besides Allah.' But if they turn away,* [from such a reasonable and just offer of Peace, there is no need to compel them to faith] *then say, "Bear witness that we have submitted to God.'* [i.e. we have submitted to God by making the offer of peace] (3:65).

Allah the Almighty has used the word "Muslim" in this verse, which according to the lexicons, has the connotation of peace and amnesty.

The traditionally held beliefs in this regard dictate that if the opponents do not listen to us, we must attack them, conquer their lands and enslave and imprison their men and women. The Divine word of Allah the Almighty clearly advises us that even if the opponents refuse to believe and turn away, we are only to call them to witness that we are Muslims and offer peace and amnesty.

Verses 178 and 179 of Surah Al-e-Imran state that Allah the Almighty has granted respite to those who renounce their faith and return to a state of disbelief! Contrary to the Divine direction, the traditionally held views preach that whether or not God has granted respite, we must not give any respite to such non-believers and we must seize them from the clutches of disbelief with the sword, lest they threaten the world of Islam! As against this, Allah the Almighty, says:

> *Surely, those who have purchased* [or acquired] *disbelief at the price of faith cannot harm Allah at all.* (3:178)

That is to say, if the world of Islam faces any danger, it is from the weakness and vice of the Muslims themselves, the non-Muslims cannot damage Islam. Further commenting on those who turn away from faith, Allah the Almighty says in the same verse:

> *And they shall have a grievous punishment. And let not the disbelievers think that Our granting them respite is good for them; the result of Our granting them respite will only be that they will increase in sin; and they shall have a humiliating punishment.* (3:178-179)

It is to be observed that Allah the Almighty declares in this verse: "We have granted respite to the disbelievers", whereas the zealots would say that the disbelievers should be given an ultimatum of three days. If they do not accept faith after that, the zealots would demand that their heads be separated from their bodies because their conduct is a source of harm to the world of Islam, while Allah the Almighty says

Surely, they cannot harm Allah in any way [or His faith]. (3:177)

From an early age, the Muslim masses of today will hear the "scholars" preaching to them that if any non-Muslim is to criticise their faith, hurt their feelings or insult their revered figures, it is their fundamental duty and responsibility to kill them immediately! Let us turn to the Holy Qur'an for guidance. In Surah Al-e-Imran verse 187, Allah the Almighty says:

> *You shall surely be tried in* [through] *your possessions and in your persons and you shall surely hear many hurtful things from those who were given the Book before you and from those who set up equals to God. But if you show fortitude and act righteously, that indeed* [your conduct is worthy, as it] *is a matter of strong determination.* (3:187)

The Holy Qur'an has therefore informed us that we will have to face up to the taunts and hurtful criticisms of opponents from among the disbelievers and the people of the Book, and further admonished us to remain patient and steadfast in the face of such attack and to tread the paths of righteousness. Such high levels of conduct the Holy Qur'an tells us will require great resolve and determination.

Alas, far from adopting this beautiful teaching, many among the Muslim masses have adopted the position that in the face of any slight or criticism it is incumbent on the believer to respond with the Jihad of the Sword.

Surah Al-Nisa

In Surah Al-Nisa, Allah the Almighty mentions those who falsely claim to be Muslims and says in verse 64:

> *These are they, the secrets of whose hearts Allah knows well. So turn away from them* [display forbearance] *and admonish them and speak to them an effective word concerning their own selves* [i.e. their state]. (4:64)

In this verse Allah the Almighty has not directed you to murder them! On the contrary, the injunction is to display forbearance and patience, and to wisely admonish them in suitable terms.

In Surah Al-Nisa, while granting permission to fight, the clarification is given that this war is against those who have barred weak Muslim men, women and children from living peacefully and commit atrocities against them; the permission to fight is not granted on the basis that these opponents have refused to accept the peaceful and tranquil message of Islam. In verse 76, Allah the Almighty says:

> *And what is the matter with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and of the weak - men, women and children - who say, 'Our Lord, take us out of this town, whose people are oppressors, and make for us some friend from Thyself and make for us from Thyself some helper?'* (4:76)

This verse demonstrates quite clearly that the fight of the Muslims against opponents is not to compel the opponents to enter your faith, on the contrary this directive is a direct result of the helpless cries of the weak women and children suffering untold atrocities at the hands of the culprits.

Regarding those who initially convert to Islam and make a pledge of obedience and then revert to disbelief in private and hatch plots against Islam, the Holy Qur'an says:

> *And they say; 'Obedience is our guiding principle;' but when they go forth from thy presence, a section of them spends the night scheming against what thou sayest. Allah records whatever they scheme by night. So turn away from them and put thy trust in Allah. And sufficient is Allah as a Disposer of affairs.* (4:82).

The masses believe that a person who converts to Islam and makes a pledge of obedience, and then goes elsewhere and preaches against Islam is an apostate and the punishment for such a person is death. Allah the Almighty admonishes us to show forbearance and to turn away from such a person and reassures us that there is no cause for great alarm or fear over such an individual's misdeeds. The believers are advised to place their trust in God as He is Beneficent, Provider of all provisions and has the power to settle everything.

It has been pointed out in Verse 85 of Surah Al-Nisa that where the Muslims have been urged to fight, the aim is to weaken the force of attack and also to apprehend the enemy. The aim is not the spread and publication of faith. Allah the Almighty says:

> *Fight, therefore, in the cause of Allah - thou art not made responsible except for thyself - and urge on the believers. It may be that Allah will restrain the might of those that disbelieve.* (4:85)

It is quite clear that for the believers to take up arms, the aim is to stop the aggression of the enemy and nothing else. Hence, it is stated categorically in verse 91 that you have no permission to attack those who do not attack you. Allah the Almighty says:

> *So, if they keep aloof from you and fight you not, and make you an offer of peace then remember that Allah has allowed you no way of aggression against them.* (4:91)

In verse 92 the clarification has been made:

> *Therefore, if they do not keep aloof from you nor offer you peace nor restrain their hands, then seize them* [you have the full right] *and kill them, wherever you find them.* (4:92)

"PUNISHMENT BY DEATH" is generally considered the appropriate punishment for an apostate. The Holy Qur'an has made no mention of it. The Holy Qur'an mentions this treachery and warns of Divine punishment but nowhere does it enjoin the killing of an apostate. In Surah Al-Nisa verse 138-139 Allah the Almighty says:

> *Those who believe, then disbelieve, then again believe, then disbelieve, and then increase in disbelief, Allah will never forgive them nor will He guide them to the way. Give to the hypocrites the tidings, that for them is a grievous punishment.* (4:138-139)

These verses speak of those who are converted to faith and then backslide and turn away, after a while they return to faith again, only to again revert to their old beliefs and to continue further and further in their rejection of faith. The result of this conduct has been declared to be deprivation of forgiveness and guidance from God, furthermore Muslims are enjoined to inform such people of the wrath and punishment of Allah, which shall surely befall them.

According to the traditionally held beliefs, there would be no question of repeated conversion and back-sliding - the first time a person gives up faith, he is to be put to death! After that, what is the meaning of relaying to them the tidings of punishment from Allah the Almighty?

If the opponents of Islam, while living in an Islamic society, ridicule Allah and His signs and resort to wickedness, it is a commonly held belief that the tongues of such people should be cut out. Does the Holy Qur'an provide any justification for such a course of action?

In verses 141of Surah Al-Nisa, Allah the Almighty says:

> *And He has already revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the signs of Allah being denied and mocked at, sit not with them until they engage in a talk other than that; for in that case* [sitting with them] *you would be like them. Surely, Allah will assemble the hypocrites and the disbelievers in Hell, all together.* (4:141)

It is said in this verse of the Holy Qur'an that if in a gathering, the signs of Allah are being rejected and ridiculed, it is impermissible to remain in such company until the topic of conversation changes. That is to say, if they begin talking of something else, it is permissible then to sit in their company.

What question of sitting with such people for the traditionalists? At the first hint of rejection and mockery of the signs of Allah, they hold that our reaction should be to pounce on the culprits immediately with sword in hand to behead them. No waiting for the topic of conversation to change! Such an opinion entirely disregards the injunctions of Allah the Almighty.

Some might claim that this verse refers to those who, not living in an Islamic society or under Islamic government, are outside the jurisdiction of Islamic law. The next verse shows clearly that the people described as mocking and rejecting faith are indeed those living within the purview of Islamic government. Allah the Almighty says:

> (These people who mock are) *those who wait for news concerning you* [of destruction], *if you have a victory from Allah, they say, 'Were we not with you?'* (4:142)

It follows therefore, that those mentioned in the first verse are those living within the jurisdiction of Islamic government.

Some of the opponents of Islam, of the people of Medina who lived under an Islamic government, used to demand certain things by way of mocking the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, as Allah the Almighty says in Surah Al-Nisa Verse 154:

> *The people of the Book ask thee to cause a Book to descend on them from heaven. They asked Moses a greater thing than this: They said, 'Show us Allah openly. Then a destructive punishment overtook them because of their transgression. Then they took the calf for worship after clear Signs had come to them, but We pardoned even that.* (4:154)

Allah the Almighty says that at the time of Moses (as), punishment was given by Allah the Almighty and forgiveness was given by Allah the Almighty – no authority was given to Moses (as) to punish the culprits. It is quite clear that if Allah the Almighty had kept the authority in His own hand when the mockery and ridicule was of a greater nature, the same holds true now and Allah the Almighty alone has the authority to take punitive action. The nature of the crime is not such that the punishment or reward for it may be meted out by human beings. In such matters, punishment and reward are in the hands of God.

Surah Al-Maidah

Leaving the masses aside, even Muslim "scholars" express the view that the use of force may be considered lawful, like force-feeding medicine to a sick person. According to these so called scholars, forcibly converting non-Muslims to Islam is not against the directive of Allah the Almighty which says:

> *There should be no compulsion in religion* (2:257).

In such a case, it is perplexing that the Holy Qur'an gives permission for social relations with the people of the Book, who are non-Muslims. In Surah Al-Maidah, verse 6, Allah the Almighty says:

This day all good things have been made lawful for you. And the food of the people of the Book is lawful for you; your food is lawful for them. And lawful for you are chaste believing women and chaste women from among those who were given the book before you. (5:6)

Now it is to be noted that the Holy Qur'an declares the food of the people of the Book lawful for the believers and declares that the chaste women of the people of the Book are also lawful for you to marry. Alas, some of the Muslim "scholars" do not consider it lawful for the people of the Book to be permitted even to live without accepting Islam! Their animosity against the people of the Book directs them to ignore all requirements of fairness and justice. The Holy Qur'an on the contrary, instructs:

O ye who believe! Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. (5:9)

You can well observe that the Holy Qur'an admonishes fairness and justice for even those who hold animosity against Islam. The traditionalists would preach a sentence of death for the "crime" of difference of faith.

Who is not aware of the grudge held by the people of the Book against Islam? After recording all their malicious activities, what does the Holy Qur'an direct? In verse 14 of Surah Al-Maidah, Allah the Almighty says:

So, because of their breaking their covenant, We have cursed them and have hardened their hearts. They pervert the words from their proper places and have forgotten a good part of that with which they were exhorted and thou wilt not cease to discover treachery on their part, except in a few of them. (5:14)

After mentioning all the above activities of the Jews, Allah the Almighty says:

So pardon them, and show forbearance. Allah loves those who do good. (5:14)

This is the Qur'anic directive regarding those who sow seeds of discord and the people of the Book! But the "scholars" continue to preach to the masses that whether the people of the Book act treacherously or not, it is our duty to employ the sword.

The teachings of the Holy Qur'an are based on fairness and justice and for the establishment of justice the Holy Qur'an emphasises most clearly that those who cause harm to life, property and honour should be punished severely and apprehended with full force. This is exactly in accordance with the principles of justice and fairness and is essential for the safeguarding of innocent people's life, property and honour. A clarification is thus also provided in verse 35 of Surah Al-Maidah, where Allah the Almighty says:

Except those who repent before you have them in your power; [about them the guiding principle is to] *know that Allah is Most forgiving, Merciful.* [Therefore you should also accord forgiveness and mercy to them]. (5:35)

Alas, since the thirteenth century, the ideology adopted by the zealots has been not to resort to forgiveness and mercy!

In Surah Al-Maidah, the presence of the people of the Book is accepted, despite their misdoings and tyranny. In verse 43, Allah the Almighty says:

They are habitual listeners to falsehood, devourers of things forbidden. If, then, they come to thee for judgement, judge between them or turn aside from them. And if thou turn aside from them, they cannot harm thee at all. And if thou judge, judge between them with justice. Surely, Allah loves those who are just. (5:43)

In this verse, within the sphere of Islamic jurisdiction, the presence of the people of the Book is accepted. Even those people of the Book who are ridden with vice – who love falsehood and the forbidden, who devour unlawful things, usurp property or possessions not rightfully theirs - the presence of even such people is not only tolerated but accepted! Moreover, such people can even have their disputes resolved according to Islamic law if they so wish, otherwise they can resolve their disputes through their own system of jurisprudence, as is mentioned in the next verse:

And how will they make you their judge, when they have with them the Torah (5:44).

Does this ideology of the Holy Qur'an find any parallel in the line of thought adopted by the Muslims in the last two centuries?

Amongst the Muslims' traditionally held views, it is taken as a dogma that the punishment for apostasy is death. In verse 45 of Surah Al-Maidah, apostasy is mentioned, but without mention of punishment. Mention is made of the innumerable blessings which the Muslims will receive in the face of one person renouncing his faith. Allah the Almighty declares:

O ye who believe! Whoso among you turns back from his religion, then let it be known that in his stead Allah will soon bring a people whom He will love and who will love Him (5:55).

Neither at this juncture, nor in any other verse in which the Holy Qur'an speaks of apostasy, has it been suggested that the punishment for apostasy is death. As a matter of fact, it can be clearly inferred from verse 62 of this Surah that the belief in the death sentence for apostasy is utterly mistaken. Allah the Almighty says:

And when they come to you they say "we believe" while they enter with disbelief and go out therewith; and Allah knows best what they conceal (5:62).

In this verse Allah the Almighty has made clear to the Holy Prophet (pboh) that when these people come to see you, they say, "we believe", they make a declaration of faith, however when they leave your presence, they are in the same state of disbelief, with which they entered.

If the punishment for apostasy had been death, then after receiving clear indication through Divine revelation that these people who make declarations of faith, are in fact disbelievers like before, then such people would be manifestly deserving of the death sentence! Is there a single example of such an incident taking place?

No one should think that the Holy Prophet (pboh) had no knowledge of their apostasy; the next verse makes it very clear that the Holy Prophet (pboh) was fully aware of the sinfulness and evil of many of them. In Al-Maidah verse 63, Allah the Almighty says:

And thou seest many of them hastening towards sin and transgression and the eating of things forbidden". (5:63)

These people who in the presence of the Holy Prophet (pboh) declared "We believe", left their meeting in a state of disbelief, manifestly visible to the Holy Prophet (pboh) in their continued indulgence in vices and excesses. In spite of this, they were not put to death.
It is quite clear that according to Holy Qur'an, the punishment for apostasy is not death. Nor did the Holy Prophet (pboh) punish apostates with death, because in the same Surah, Al-Maidah verse 100, a clear injunction to the contrary is present:

On the messenger lies only the conveying of the message [to punish or not to punish is up to Allah the Almighty, as is said here]. *And Allah knows what you reveal and what you hide* (5:100)

Surah Al-An'âm

In spite of living within an Islamic society and under the jurisdiction of an Islamic government, a group of people continuously indulge in vain arguments against the signs of Allah the Almighty. Regarding such people, Allah the Almighty says:

"And when you see those who trifle with Our Sign, then turn thou away from them [it is not directed here that you use force against them] *until they engage in a discourse other than that* [in that case, you are allowed to resume their company]. *And if Satan causes thee to forget, then sit not, after recollection, with the unjust people.* (6:69)

In this verse there is no instruction to put to death those who ridicule the signs of Allah; on the contrary the directive is to turn away from them and not to sit in their company.

In verse 71 of the same Surah, emphasis has been placed on the injunction not to participate in the activities of those who are Muslims in name alone and who have reduced their religion to a sport and pastime. We are directed to continue to admonish them through the Holy Qur'an. Allah the Almighty says:

And let alone those who take their religion for a sport and a pastime, [here it is to be noted that the directive is to leave these miscreants alone, not that you kill them!] *and whom worldly life has beguiled. And admonish people thereby* [i.e. by means of the Holy Qur'an] *lest a soul be consigned to perdition for what it has wrought.* (6:71)

The idea of forcibly converting the non-believers with the sword is a concept given common currency. Allah the Almighty says in verse 108 of this Surah:

"And if Allah had enforced His will, they would not have set up gods with Him And we have not made thee a keeper over them and nor art thou over them a guardian". (6:108)

Thus these scholars seek to place on every Muslim a responsibility which Allah the Almighty, in His Wisdom, did not place even upon the Holy Prophet (pboh)!

The exemplary Islamic teachings regarding forbearance and gracious tolerance vouchsafed to the Muslims in verse 109 of this Surah have been more or less forgotten by society. Allah the Almighty says:

"And revile not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, revile Allah in their ignorance. Thus unto every people have We caused their doing to seem fair. Then unto their Lord is their return; and He will inform them of what they used to do" (6:109).

In this verse, there is a directive not to abuse the false gods which others may worship. Moreover, it is stated that as a reaction to such abuse, people might become guilty of abusing Allah the Almighty. In spite of this, the traditionally held belief of Muslims seems to be that they themselves can revile their opponents in any terms but if any opponent should respond in kind, he should be set upon with knives and daggers.

If the opponents reject the Holy Prophet (pboh) as false, the scholars preach that the tongue which made such an exclamation should be cut out, while in verse 148 of this Surah, the Divine directive to the Holy Prophet (pboh) says:

But if they accuse thee of falsehood, say, 'Your Lord is possessed of all embracing mercy, [that is to say that in-spite of your rejection and disbelief your Lord is Merciful, but you should also remember that] *and His wrath shall not be turned back from the guilty people'.* (6:148)

The opponents of Islam used to demand all manner of miracles and signs, with the intention of ridiculing Islam. What should be the reaction of the Muslims when faced with this kind of attitude and slander?

The answer to this is found in verse 159 of this Surah, Allah the Almighty says:

Do they expect aught but that angels should come to them or that thy Lord should come or that some of the Signs of thy Lord should come? The day when some of the Signs of thy Lord shall come, to believe in them shall not profit a soul which believed not before, nor earned any good by its faith.(6:159)

Now in the face of such opponents and demands that angels should descend, that God should descend, that Divine signs should appear and so on, what should be the reaction of the Muslims? The raising of the sword for violence, bloodshed and murder? No! Allah the Almighty admonishes thus:

Say, 'Wait ye, We too are waiting' [to see what Allah the Almighty's judgement will be] (6:159).

The traditionally held views have placed the responsibility of doing away with sectarian and factionary elements in society upon the warriors of Islam. Thus these so-called warriors of Islam manufacture and appropriate for themselves a responsibility which is specifically not given to the Holy Prophet (pboh) according to verse 160 of Surah Al-An'âm. Allah the Almighty says:

As for those who split up their religion and became divided into sects thou hast no concern at all with them. Surely their case will come before Allah. [It evidently states that Allah the Almighty has reserved that judgment for Himself, as He continues to say] *Then will He inform them of what they used to do.* (6:160)

Surah Al-A'Raf

In today's so-called Islamic society, whether Islam is being truly practiced or not, the dictate issued is to call people to guidance and to use the compulsion of the sword if they refuse - while in Surah Al-Araf verses 199 and 200, Allah the Almighty says:

And if you invite them to guidance, they hear not. And thou seest them looking towards thee, but they see not. [i.e. they totally blank you out as if they see nothing; even then, do not resort to force against them.]. *Take to forgiveness,* [the word used suggests that you hold fast to forbearance and forgiveness] *and enjoin kindness,* [instead of resorting to force the instruction is to] *turn away from the ignorant.* (7:199-200)

Surah Al-Anfal

In the field of Badr, Allah the Almighty granted a glorious victory to the Holy Prophet (pboh) and his companions. The verses of the Holy Qur'an revealed at that occasion clearly state that the war was initiated by the infidels and that if war was to be resumed after the great victory of the Muslims and the humiliating defeat of the enemy, it would be initiated by the enemy.

In verse 20 Allah the Almighty says, addressing the non-believers:

If you sought a judgement, then judgement has indeed come to you. And if you desist, it will be better for you; but if you return to hostility, we too will return. And your party shall be of no avail at all to you, however numerous it be and know that Allah is with the believers. (8:20)

This section of the verse, stating *"if you desist, it will be better for you, but if you return to hostility, we too will return"* clearly demonstrates that hostilities were initiated by the non-believers and that it would be better for them to desist. Were they to attack again as they attacked before, even their great numbers would be of no help because Divine assistance would be on the side of the Muslims. This declaration shows clearly that the hostilities were initiated by the disbelievers but some folklore would have us believe that the Muslims had started the hostilities!

One strange concept found amongst the traditional beliefs is that there are grounds for Muslims to use force, initiate hostilities, or to start a war. This argument claims that there are directives, which allow all insurrection to be suppressed and crushed by force. They say that as the false views of the opponents of Islam or even those of sects within Islam are damaging, it is entirely lawful and legitimate to use force to eradicate them.

The question which arises, however, is whether the use of force is necessary or lawful for eradicating every kind of mischief. The verses of the Holy Qur'an clearly enjoin that if any group initiates hostilities against Muslims unjustly, then to counter such an attack with force is not only lawful but necessary. This kind of action is categorised as defensive and as a basic human right, whether in Islam or outside Islam.

If it is declared lawful that every wrong idea, every false ideology must be annihilated by force on the basis that they are a source of mischief or trial then it becomes incumbent on every Muslim to put to death his children and destroy

his wealth and belongings because the Holy Qur'an has declared them to be "fitna", which means mischief or trial. In verse 29 of Surah Al-Anfal, Allah the Almighty says:

And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial. (8:29)

If the directive is to do away with all "trials" with the sword, then when the Holy Qur'an declares possessions and children to be a "trial", are we then required to annihilate them?

The fact is that the only evil and trial which can be legitimately combated with force is the attempt by others to compel a certain belief or disbelief by force. As the non-believers were attempting to eradicate Islam not through the use of argument or miracles but by force and strength alone, Allah the Almighty says in verses 39 and 40:

Say to those who disbelieve, if they desist, [and cease their hostilities] *that which is past will be forgiven them; and if they return thereto,* [what they were doing] *then verily, the example of the former peoples has already gone before them. And* [then] *fight them until there is no persecution and religion is wholly for Allah.* [i.e. the persecution and fear of war and attacks have no bearing on the adopted faith, the faith is solely for the sake of God]. *But if they desist, then surely Allah is watchful of what they do.* (8:39-40)

The perfection of the Holy Qur'an should be closely noted - there is no room to infer an incorrect interpretation. When in verse 29, children and possessions were declared a source of mischief or trial it was thus made clear that not everything categorised as such is to be combated with force. On the contrary, the only evil which must be combated with force is force: i.e. force which is used to impose faith upon people and where religion is no longer solely for the sake of God.

The Muslims of this age are trapped in a self-contradiction. Practically speaking, they are at peace with non-Muslims, even with those who associate partners with Allah. As a matter of fact, these Muslims are often subsisting entirely on the assistance they receive from non-believers. Their traditionally held views meanwhile tell them it is unlawful to even make peace with non-Muslims!

Let us turn to the Holy Qur'an for guidance. The Holy Qur'an says in verses 62-63 of Surah Al-Anfal :

And if they incline towards Peace, incline thou also towards it, and put thy trust in Allah. Surely, it is He Who is All-Hearing, All Knowing. And if they intend to deceive thee, [it is essential for you to maintain peace] *then surely Allah is sufficient for thee. He it is Who has strengthened thee with His help and with the believers;* (8:62-63)

In these verses there is a forceful admonishment to make peace if the attacking enemies sue for it. Even if it is apparent that such an offer on their part is only a deception, it remains the obligation of the Muslims to accept the offer of peace and to rely on Allah's protection from the deception of the enemy. In the real world, despite the Muslims' traditional belief that cordial relations with non-Muslims are unlawful, social and political relations are maintained for all intents and purposes!

In verse 73 of Surah Al-Anfal, Allah the Almighty says:

As for those who have believed but have not left their homes, you are not at all responsible for their protection until they leave their homes. But if they seek your help in the matter of religion, then it is your duty to help them, except against a people between whom and yourselves there is a treaty. (8:73)

In this verse it is made clear that a Muslim nation cannot provide assistance for a Muslim community against the nation in which such a community is resident (i.e. the community has not migrated).

Surah Al-Tauba

In World politics today, all Muslim countries are essentially dependent on secular or religious non-Muslim nations and have formulated various pacts with them. On the other hand, as far as religious edict is concerned, their directive is that a Jihad should be conducted against the non-believers and it is essential to make all non-believers recite the credo of Islam. Let us turn to the Qur'an. In verse 4 of Surah Al-Tauba, Allah the Almighty says:

Excepting those of the idolaters with whom you have entered into a treaty and who have not fallen short of fulfilling their obligations to you, nor aided anyone against you. So fulfil to these the treaty you have made with them till their term. Surely, Allah loves those who are righteous. (9:4)

The traditionalists would dictate that the non-believers who persist in their refusal to believe should be put to death, while the Holy Qur'an's edict permits the making of pacts with non-believers! Moreover, the Qur'an directs that such pacts should be fulfilled to the letter, and declares that to do so is an act of righteousness!

If a disbeliever falls into your hands, what would be the edict issued by those who make pronouncements in the name of "Jihad"? What is the pronouncement of the Holy Qur'an? Allah the Almighty says in Surah Al-Tauba verse: 6

And if anyone of the idolaters asks protection of thee, grant him protection so that he may hear the word of Allah; then convey him to his place of security That is because they are a people who have no knowledge. (9:6)

Is the noble concept of forbearance embodied in this verse mirrored in any way in the traditional edicts?

The traditional edicts declare it obligatory to wage war when faced with non-acceptance of Islam by the enemy. Verse 13 of Surah Al-Tauba describes an entirely different occasion for stoking the fires of war. Allah the Almighty says:

Will you not fight people who have broken their oaths (i.e. the pacts bound by firm promises) who plotted to turn out the messenger of Allah, and they were the first to commence hostilities against you. (9:13)

This verse shows quite clearly that there is no moral or legal impediment to fighting those who have attacked first and broken their pledges of peace and who have plotted against the Messenger of God. This verse makes it clear and obvious that grounds for war were established when hostilities were initiated by the enemy, yet some scholars state that it was the Muslims who attacked first on the basis of the non-acceptance of Islam by the enemy! Verse 36 of Surah Al-Tauba also states the reasons for war. Allah the Almighty says:

And fight the idolaters all together (united amongst yourselves) as they fight you all together. It is quite clear here that before fighting the Muslims the non-believers had united as one force as is spoken of in the word "Kama" meaning "the way" or "like" they have united.

It is apparent here that before fighting the Muslims, the non-believers had united as one force. This is indicated by the word "Kama" (translated by the word "as" above) meaning "the way" or "like" they have united.

For those who enter the faith and then turn away from it, the often and forcefully stated traditional edict is that the punishment is death. The Holy Qur'an on the other hand, states again and again that these hypocrites first made a declaration of their faith in Islam, and then they renounced their faith. where the Holy Prophet (pboh) put a single one of these hypocrites to death!
The Holy Qur'an then mentions their mischief, their ridicule, their excuses and pretexts and finally advises that they be treated with forbearance. Exhortation should be given to them towards truth and guidance! Nowhere is it said that they should be put to death, despite the Holy Prophet (saw) being informed through Divine revelation that these claimants of belief were hypocrites who had turned away from faith. Not a single instance can be found In Verse 64 to 66 of this Surah, Allah the Almighty says:

The hypocrites fear (mockingly) lest a surah (a chapter of the Holy Qur'an) should be revealed against them, informing them of what is in their hearts. Say, 'Mock ye! Surely Allah will bring to light what you fear.' And if thou question them, they will most surely say, 'We were only talking idly and jesting.' Say, 'Was it Allah and His Signs and His Messenger that you mocked at? (9:64-65)

After this clear statement declaring them apostates, were they put to death? Instead of killing them Allah the Almighty says in the next verse:

'Offer no excuse. You have certainly disbelieved after your believing (i.e. you became apostates). If We forgive a party from among you, a party shall We punish, for they have been guilty'. (9:66)

The same hypocrites who are described as having disbelieved after believing are mentioned in verse 94-95 of this Surah:

They will make excuses to you when you return to them. Say, 'Make no excuses we will not believe you. Allah has already informed us of the facts about you. (9:94)

If the traditional edicts held true, they should certainly have been put to death for the Divinely revealed fact of their abandoning faith after accepting it. Instead what was said to them is stated in the Holy Qur'an:

And Allah will observe your conduct, and also His Messenger; then you will be brought back to Him Who knows the unseen and the seen, and He will tell you all that you used to do.' They will swear to you by Allah, when you return to them, that you may leave them alone. So leave them alone. (The traditionally held beliefs would have dictated that they be put to death! Allah the Almighty says) Surely they are foul and their abode is Hell--a fit recompense for that which they used to earn. (9:94-95)

Thus regarding these apostates whom traditional belief would sentence to death, Allah the Almighty says:

And say, 'Do what you may, surely Allah will watch your acts, so also will His Messenger and the believers. (But in accordance to the edicts of the traditional scholars, these people will be put to death as soon as their apostasy becomes known, but the verse goes on to say:) And you shall be made to return to the knower of the unseen and the seen; then He will tell you what you used to do.' (9:105)

In Verse 129 Allah the Almighty says:

But if they turn away, say, 'Allah is sufficient for me.' (9:129)

Alas, the fabricated and twisted beliefs circulated amongst the Muslim public preach that Allah can not be taken as sufficient. Those who hear the message of faith and turn away should be compelled to recite the Kalima, the credo of Islam, else they should be immediately dispatched from this world!

(to be continued)

Did The Causes Of The Crusades Change Between The First And Fourth Crusade?

By Nasar Ahmad

The Crusades were introduced as armed pilgrimages in order to get Jerusalem and the rest of the Holy Land back under Christian control. People were offered the chance to have their sins forgiven in return for taking part in an expedition to the East, blessed by God. As the crusades developed, so did their causes and the following analysis will outline how and why the causes changed between the First and Fourth Crusade.

The 18th November 1095 saw the starting point of the crusades at the Council of Clermont, by Pope Urban II. The original objective of the crusades was to help the Christian churches in the East, but shortly after the idea was introduced, people soon had another object in mind: *'to free the Holy Land and, above all, Jerusalem ... from the yoke of heathen dominion'*.

A crusade was seen as a pilgrimage, but an armed one which was thought to be extremely meritorious and was given special privileges by the church. St Augustine's doctrine of the '*bellum justum*' (just war) was of great importance in the Middle Ages because it stated that war was only allowed in a just cause, for example, to defend or recover something rightly belonging to you, and this idea was used to justify the crusades. Men were told that they would be granted full forgiveness of all their sins if they went on a crusade.

The general causes of the crusades were firstly, to capture the Holy Land because Jerusalem was the heart of Christianity and a place of pilgrimage, and also because Christians believed that God had chosen Jerusalem to be the focal point in Medieval Europe; it was also a sacred place for them because it was where Jesus had lived, died and walked around in. The Pope thought that the Muslims controlling it were polluting their holy place. Secondly, the crusades were introduced for reasons of expansion due to land and economic factors and in order to achieve a universal Christian Community. Thirdly, it was a means for the fulfilment of the Pope's desire to wield political and economic power over all other leaders.

There was also a huge threat from Islam, which had swept through Medieval Europe in the Seventh Century, and the crusades were seen as a way of containing Muslim expansion. The crusades also stopped internal fighting among the Christian nations by sending their people off on crusades to fight Muslims instead, depicted as their common enemy.

The First Crusade was launched by Pope Urban II in 1096 and concluded in 1099. Crusaders were given cloth crosses as a symbol of God's protection, and they also meant that the crusader got privileges such as paying no taxes, permission to bear arms, and they were granted moratorium on debts. The Pope realised that the idea of crusades excited men of all classes not just knights, therefore, he tried to stop the old and the sick from going on them. The 'Pope put forward Jerusalem as a goal to link crusades with pilgrimages, to appeal to people, but the real reason for the First Crusade is thought to be in order to help the Byzantine emperor bring 'the Latin and Greek churches closer to one another'. However, recently this view has been challenged and it is argued that Jerusalem was the main objective and the union of churches in the East was merely another aim. During the First Crusade, Western Europe went into the Byzantine Empire, they fought their way down and captured large parts of the Holy Land, including Jerusalem. Small Crusader States were formed shortly after this. After the First Crusade men made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and looked towards it with 'pride and devotion' because it was in Latin control. However, on the eve of Christmas 1144, Muslims broke into Edessa in North Mesopotamia, which was the capital of the first Latin Christian country established during the First Crusade.

Although the news of the fall of Edessa shocked the West, it didn't immediately encourage them to launch another crusade. Pope Eugene III who came to the throne in 1145 *'issued the first crusading bull, known from its opening words as Quantum Praedecessores'* to drum up support for another crusade. King Louis VII and Eugene III had extremely differing ideas and on Christmas 1145 Louis announced he was 'to lead an expedition to the East', when he held court at Bourges. This expedition was only meant to be an armed pilgrimage by the French, which could be of help to the Holy Land, rather than a repeat of the 1095 Crusade. Following this announcement, Bishop Godfrey of Langres asked

nobles to come forward with their King and fight for God, without mention of the Pope or the Papal Bull. However, the nobles were not interested in the crusade at the time. King Louis' plan was unintentionally seen as a crusade and this caused problems because the Pope had issued the Crusading Bull earlier.

The Church was meant to control the crusading movement and if the King's expedition took place the church would lose this privilege. Eventually the church and the French Courts came to a compromise resulting in the reissuing of an amended *Quantum Praedecessores* on March 1st 1146. This new version became the outline for all future papal Crusading Bulls. It was split into three sections: *'the narrative, the exhortation and the privileges (narratio, exhortatio, privilegia)'*. In the opening lines, the Pope made clear his role as the leader of the Crusade and reminded people of the role played by Pope Urban II in introducing the First Crusade. The First Crusade was described briefly as well as the fall of Edessa. In the second section the nobles were asked to defend '*like good sons, the land which their brave fathers had won*, and in the third part came a description of privileges given to crusaders. Eugene III entrusted the Abbot of Clairvaux with the role of preaching the crusade in the Alps and although the original idea of the crusade for the Second Crusade came from the Pope, it only came into action due to Bernard Clairvaux.

After the failure to recapture the lost lands in the Second Crusade, Europe had had enough of crusades, but the late 1160s saw numerous 'appeals for help coming from the Holy Land,' and soon these appeals began to affect public opinion on the idea of another armed pilgrimage, because the crusades were still seen as being extremely rewarding. The situation of Emperor Fredrick I Barbarossa was not favourable at this time. However, after 1184 Barbarossa realised the importance of him playing a role in the crusades in order to retain his image in Europe. In 1166 Henry II introduced a crusading tax in the West in order to help the Holy Land and fund further crusades, but at this time there was no sign of a crusade in the near future.

Between 1184 and 1185 the West were told that something had to be done quickly in order for there to be any chance of Jerusalem being saved, therefore Barbarossa came a lot closer to promising a crusade for 1186. It is thought that later Barbarossa used the idea of the crusade to make his negotiations with the curia (members of the governing body in the Roman Catholic Church) in Italy run smoothly, but this idea fell through in November 1185 when the newly elected Pope Urban III began opposing Emperor Barbarossa. However, in 1187 Urban III died from shock after hearing about the disastrous defeat at Hattin that summer in which the Muslim forces, under Saladin, captured or killed most of the crusader forces. George VIII, his successor, *'gave decisive momentum to the preaching of the Crusade'*. His *'crusading encyclical Audita tremendi'* was extremely touching and got a huge response. The first to take the cross was one of Henry II's sons, Richard the Lionheart, who was the Count of Poitou.

The Third Crusade, the Anglo-French Crusade, saw Richard fight Saladin, who had reunited Muslims in Egypt and Syria and also managed to recapture Jerusalem. In the summer of 1192 Saladin captured Jaffa, so Richard sailed to Jaffa and famously cleared the town of Muslims. Finally, on Sept 2nd a truce was made, because both Saladin and Richard realised that neither could defeat the other completely. Despite this, the Christians were unable to recapture Jerusalem, which was the original aim for the crusades. Most of Palestine was in Muslim hands, however the West had '*ensured the existence of the Crusader States for another hundred years*' .

A new crusade was in the early stages of being planned shortly after the Third Crusade ended, because Henry VI, the new emperor, visualised a *'crusade in which political considerations played a large part'*. Henry focused mainly on Byzantine because his brother Philip had married the Emperor of Byzantine's daughter in 1197, allowing Henry to pressurise Byzantine into recognising his right to an inheritance there. Henry VI took the cross himself in 1195 in order to reach some kind of settlement with the Pope, but later had to give up his role as leader of the crusade. Henry died shortly afterwards on September 28th 1197.

Despite the collapse of the German Crusade in 1198, when Innocent III was elected Pope he visualised the Pope being *'a kind of priest-king'*. He believed that crusades shouldn't be directed by the King because this limited the Pope's power and when the crusades were first introduced the Pope was meant to have absolute control. Pope Innocent III had a political objective and he wanted to *'rebuild the old Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem''* which had been *'very imperfectly restored in 1192*'.

The Pope pointed out the fact that the only successful crusade had been the First Crusade, and he was adamant that this was due to the lack of

monarchical intervention. In August 1198 he introduced a new crusade because he realised that his first idea was inadequate. The idea of the end of time being at hand played a vital role in bringing about the First Crusade, but had now been replaced by the preaching of *'a practical code of morals with the accent on a purifying act of penance, here and now'*. There was also the introduction of the idea that the crusaders must be poor and those with pure spirits, and the idea that they were *'called to free the Holy Land was ethically unobjectionable'*.

The Fourth Crusades' goal differed from the original causes and reasons for the crusades due to a shortage of funds. Another fundamental difference was that the Fourth Crusade was directed towards Egypt, but this was unknown to the crusaders because they would not have agreed, had they known. The crusaders believed that they were going for the same reasons that the crusaders in the First Crusade went for, i.e. to recapture the Holy Land. They were going to Egypt because unless Egypt's' power was weakened, the crusaders would be unable to help those in Jerusalem. In the end the Fourth Crusade took the crusaders to Constantinople, where they were easily tempted by the relics and driven by their hatred for Greeks.

There are two theories with regards to the Fourth Crusade ending up in Constantinople. The first is the *chance theory*, which suggests that the crusaders and those leading the crusade went there unintentionally due to a series of problems that arose during their journey. The second, the *intrigue theory* suggests that this had in fact been a well-thought out plan. On July 14th 1203, the crusaders attacked from the land and sea, and after months of revolts and fighting, on April 12th 1204, they won control of Constantinople.

Conclusion

In 1095 when Pope Urban II introduced the idea for the First Crusade, he made it evident that the main objective of the crusades was to capture the Holy Land, most importantly Jerusalem, as it was perceived to be the heart of Christianity and also to help the Christian churches in the East. The First Crusade had achieved its goal, but the Second Crusade was launched in 1146 after Pope Eugene III and King Louis VII both came to a compromise over King Louis' announcement of an expedition to the East. The Second Crusade was not proposed following the fall of Edessa, which would have been in keeping with the original causes for the crusades, but was instead launched in order for the Pope to retain control of the crusading movement. The Third Crusade was launched in 1187 after the Second Crusade failed to recapture the lost lands. After the shock of the defeat at Hattin which resulted in Pope Urban III dying, the new Pope, George VIII, convinced the West to launch another crusade to get revenge and also because Saladin and the Muslims from Egypt and Syria had reunited and recaptured Jerusalem.

The Third Crusade was instigated with the same intentions as the First, however, the West were unsuccessful in their attempt to regain Jerusalem from Muslim control. The Fourth Crusade was the one crusade which lost almost total sight of the original causes for the crusades. Henry VI planned a crusade almost as soon as the Third Crusade ended for the purely selfish reason of gaining control in the Byzantine Empire; however, following his death in 1197, this idea collapsed. Pope Innocent III initiated the Fourth Crusade in 1198 in order to further his own power, because he used the idea of the crusade to introduce his new ideas for the crusading movement. Although he used the idea of freeing the Holy Land and preached about crusaders being granted forgiveness for their sins, he planned the crusade to only reach Egypt, and lost sight of recapturing Jerusalem. The crusade ended up in Constantinople, and although it is arguable whether or not this change of destination was planned or not, the fact remains that the Pope and those leading the crusade knew that they were not leading the crusaders to recapture Jerusalem, which was the fundamental aim of the crusading movement.

The development of the crusades inspired a development in the rivalry between the church and the throne, as both wanted to have control of the crusades. As the crusading movement progressed, it is true to say that those leading the crusades lost sight of their original causes and instead were fuelled by their desire for power and worldly goods.

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Tabligh Question & Answer Sessions

By Majlis Ansarulla UK

By: Sheikh Rafique Tahir Qaid Tabligh

In accordance with the a programme of activities set by the Quiadat Tabligh, Majlis Ansarullah UK held five Regional Tabligh Question & Answer Sessions during the past few weeks.

MIDDLESEX

On 18th November the Middlesex Region organised their Question & Answer session on the topic of "Islam's Role In Building A Harmonious Society".

The venue was the Dominion Centre in Southall. Over a hundred people from various faiths, including Jews, Christians, Sikhs and Hindus participated. 33 were non-Ahmadi guests.

Proceedings began with a recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Regional Nazim Middlesex Mohammed Sohail Qureshi. The translation was given by Mr Mahmud Baig Mirza. This was followed with a welcome address and introduction by the Chairman of the event Naib Sadar, Mr Waleed Ahmad.

The main speaker at the meeting was Maulana Ata-ul-Mujeeb Rashed. Following his address questions were invited from the audience.

The formal proceedings concluded with a vote of thanks, by the local missionary, Maulana Mashood Ahmad Rana and Imam Sahib led everyone in a silent prayer. The discussions with guests carried on over dinner which followed immediately afterwards.

ISLAMABAD

A Question and Answer session was held on Saturday 24th November 2007. The event was organized by the Reading Ziamat and the venue was the Kings International College in Camberley.

The topic set for the meeting was Islam's Role in Building a Harmonious Society. It began with a recitation of the Holy Quran, by Maulana Abdul Momin Tahir. Naib Sadr Majlis Ansarullah UK Mr Waleed Ahmad then presented a brief introduction of the Jamaat - its history, its objectives and its activities.

After this Sadr Ansarullah UK, Ch. Waseem Ahmad introduced Imam Sahib to the audience. Imam Sahib was the main speaker and he addressed the meeting for nearly 40 minutes on the subject at hand.

The audience was then invited to ask questions and a very interesting session ensued lasting till 8.30 p.m. A silent prayer followed after which the guests were invited to dinning hall where dinner was served.

Out of a total attendance of 73 participants, 43 were guests. These were from various walks of life including doctors, policemen, teachers Councillors from the Boroughs of Surrey Heath and Rushmoor and others.

SOUTH

The South Region held its Question & Session on Sunday 25th November 2007 at Bait-us-Subahn, Croydon. There were 40 guests including the Deputy Mayor of Croydon, councillors, teachers and others. Altogether the participation was 150 including ladies.

The seminar was chaired by Sadar Ansarullah UK Ch Waseem Ahmad Sahib. Following a recitation from the Holy Quran by Hafiz Fazl-e-Rabby Sahib and its translation, Naib Sadr Mr Waleed Ahmad gave a brief introduction to the Jamaat. The chairman then introduced the main speaker, Maulana Ata-ul-Mujeeb Rashed to the audience. Imam Sahib spoke for nearly half an hour on the subject of 'Role of Religion

in Society'. Questions were next invited from the floor. Naib Sadr Sahib read out around 20 questions asked by the guests. The seminar lasted for 2 hours after which dinner was served to the guests.

LONDON

The London Region organised its Regional Question and Answer session on the subject of 'Creating Peace in our Society' at Bait-ul-Futuh. The event took place on Saturday 9th December and its attendance of 65 guests made this one of the more successful Question and Answer sessions held by Majlis Ansarullah in recent weeks.

Proceedings began just after 4.30 p.m. with a recitation from the Holy Quran by Syed Naseer Shah and translation by Syed Nasir Safeer after which Naib Sadar Mr Waleed Ahmad gave a brief introduction to the Jamaat. Next, Sadar Ansarullah UK Ch. Waseem Ahmad, who was chairing the event, briefed the audience about the main speaker of the evening, Maulana Ata-ul-Mujeeb Rashed.

Imam Sahib spoke for just over 20 minutes on the subject after which questions were taken from the floor. These were posed by Naib Sadar Sahib. There were 20 questions in total out of which 14 were on the subject under discussion. The audience included many leading members of the community including police officers, councillors and religious leaders.

Proceedings were brought to a close with a silent prayer led by Imam Sahib just after 7.15 p.m. following which dinner was served.

NORTH WEST

In Manchester, the North West Region organised its Question and Answer session on Sunday 9th December. Its selected topic was 'Islamic Point of View on Extremism and Terrorism'. Sadar Sahib Ansarullah UK, Ch. Waseem Ahmad chaired the meeting and Imam Sahib was the main speaker. Following his address questions were taken from the floor and the meeting was concluded with a silent prayer. Dinner was served. The total attendance of non Ahmadi guests including ladies was eighteen

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Evolution of Religious Teachings, *(Continued from page 8)*

"O ye who believe! Let not one people deride another people, haply they may be better than they, nor let one group of women deride other women, haply they may be better than they. And do not defame your people nor call one another by nick-names. It is an evil thing to be called by bad name after having believed; and those who repent not, such are the wrongdoers." (*Al-Hujurat* 49:12)

"You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love; and whatever you spend, Allah surely knows it well." (*Al'Imran* 3:93)

"The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and for those employed in connection therewith, and for those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and for the freeing of slaves, and for those in debt, and for the cause of Allah and for the wayfarer – an ordinance from Allah. And Allah is All Knowing, Wise." (*Al-Taubah* 9:60)

"And in their wealth was a share for those who asked for help and for those who could not."(*Al-Dhariyat* 51:20)

In fact we can go on quoting passage after passage from the Holy Qur'an about the glorious teaching that Allah has revealed to His Messenger Hadhrat Muhammad[saws] for the guidance of all the people. It is only if the people at large will realise this and follow it and reap all the rewards that it brings with it.

Acknowledgement: Ser-e-Roohani (Urdu) the series of lectures by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih the Second, inspired this article. May Allah bless him and elevate his stature in Heaven Ameen.

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